



# Wyoming Game and Fish Department

## Pinedale Region

### May 2017 Newsletter



## Meadow Lake Grayling

Arctic grayling are native to cold, clear freshwaters of the northern hemisphere. Grayling have been stocked to a handful of lakes in Wyoming and provide some great sport-fishing opportunities. Grayling are most easily distinguished by their unmistakable large, colorful dorsal fin. The rest of their body is slate to purple in color.



Meadow lake, approximately 13 miles southeast of Pinedale, is arguably the most important grayling fishery in the state as it serves as the egg source for all other Wyoming waters and a handful of other states as well. Previously devoid of fish, Meadow Lake was first stocked with grayling from Grebe Lake in Yellowstone National Park in 1949.

Now, each spring soon after ice-off, fish will start making their way up the inlet to spawn. A permanent fish trap has been constructed to catch several hundred fish for the spawning operation. Each female will produce an average of 5000-6000 eggs. This year a total of 450,000 eggs were collected and fertilized on the spot with milt from the males.

The eggs were then transported to the Dubois hatchery as well as the state of Idaho for trade. The Wyoming fish will eventually be stocked in a handful of waters across the state. In addition to Meadow Lake, grayling can be found in Trout Creek Lake and Bog Lake in the Lander region, Lake of the Woods and Toppings Lake in the Jackson Region, Dipper Lake and N. Crow Reservoir in the Laramie Region, Lilly Lake in the Cody Region and Yesness and Jessica's ponds in the Casper Region.







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## Wildlife & Roadways Summit

Wyoming Game and Fish Department Director Scott Talbott (Left) kicked off the Wildlife & Roadways Summit held April 26-27 in Pinedale. The event was attended by the maximum 130 people and organizers had to turn people away. The event, sponsored by Wyoming's Game and Fish and the Department of Transportation, was designed to bring members of the two agencies, NGOs and members of the public together to identify problem areas for wildlife vehicle collisions across the state, solutions for reducing those collisions and ideas for funding those solutions. A lot of great ideas were generated ranging from simple things like planting different vegetation in road right-of-ways to more grand ideas like the Trapper's Point wildlife crossing structures constructed west of Pinedale. Representatives from neighboring states attended to learn how to offer similar events in their states.



## Daniel School Tour

Big Piney first-graders enjoyed an end-of-the-school-year field trip to the Daniel Fish Hatchery recently. Assistant Hatchery Superintendent Greg Anderson and Fish Culturist Jacob Rook gave the kids a tour including the ever-popular opportunity to feed the fish (Below) while Information and Education Specialist Mark Gocke (left) engaged the youngsters with a program on Wyoming furbearers.





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## Dollar Lake Treatment Planned

Pinedale fisheries managers are planning to restore the fishing in Dollar Lake adjacent to the Green River north of Pinedale. The lake has become infested with the non-native white sucker, so the plan is to clean out all the fish and restock it with both the rainbows the lake had become known for and tiger trout, a sterile brown trout-brook trout hybrid.

In 2007, fish biologists made a startling discovery when the first non-native white sucker was captured during routine monitoring of the fish population in the lake. Since then, white sucker numbers have grown exponentially and today account for 99% of the fish population in the lake. Given the popularity of suckers as a live baitfish in other parts of the state, it is suspected that the white suckers may have been illegally introduced into Dollar Lake by bait fisherman.

This popular lake attracts thousands of anglers every year due to its close proximity to the Upper Green River road (FS 650) and its historically good rainbow trout population.

The best means of dealing with sucker populations like the one in Dollar Lake is to completely eradicate them. In most instances, eradication of a fish species involves the application of a fish toxicant, such as rotenone, that will remove all of the fish in a water body. Rotenone has been successfully used to remove undesirable fish species in many places.



Pinedale fish biologists are planning to treat the lake in late August. Once the white sucker population has been removed, the lake will be restocked with the rainbow and tiger trout later this fall where they will likely flourish again in a competitor-free environment.

Tiger trout are an effective predator of other fish and will be used to prevent the future establishment of another white sucker population. Rainbow trout that are stocked in Dollar Lake would be too large for most tiger trout to eat. Other species of fish native to the lake, such as speckled dace and mountain sucker, may also be introduced to rebuild the original fish community.



## Soda Lake Opener

Pinedale Fish Biologist Pete Cavalli reports that the winter kill at Soda Lake was almost nonexistent this year, finding only four or five dead fish after the ice receded. Cavalli also reported that fishing on the May 10 opener wasn't as good as last year, but still pretty good. There were fewer anglers with never more than 35 anglers on the water at one time. In 2002, there were over 100 boats on the water at one time and several shore anglers as well. Only 27% of anglers interviewed did not catch a fish and a relatively large percentage of folks reported catching 5-10 fish. Anglers seemed to catch both brown and brook trout in about equal number.







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Wildlife biologist Gary Fralick and Pinedale Brucellosis-Feedground-Habitat Biologist Becky Fuda are seen here collaring a three-year-old ram when it was captured and collared in late January.

## Bighorn Ram Succumbs to Winter

In mid-April Game and Fish Wildlife Biologist Gary Fralick received the message of a mortality signal for a three-year-old bighorn ram that had been captured and collared back in January of this year. Fralick was joined by Pinedale Brucellosis-Feedground-Habitat (BFH) Biologist Becky Fuda and Wyoming Wild Sheep Foundation Director Steve Kilpatrick. Becky was also part of the original capture back in January.

The ram was one of eight sheep originally captured along the crest of the Wyoming Range, including six ewes and two rams. This ram was captured near Wyoming Peak and it was recovered on April 14 in the head of Middle Piney Creek. The cause of death was undetermined.

The ram was part of an ongoing statewide disease surveillance project and this was the first time any sheep had been captured in the Wyoming Range. The sheep were also fitted with GPS collars to learn more about the animal's fine-scale movements over the next two years as well as their

distribution and survival. Biologists are particularly interested to see if there is interchange between the Darby Mountain herd and the southern portion (Ramshorn Mountain area) of the Jackson Herd.



BFH Biologist Becky Fuda recovering the GPS collar of a ram she helped collar in the Wyoming Range back in January.



## Luke Lynch WHMA Opens

The Pinedale Habitat & Access crews were busy distributing gravel to new parking areas at the Luke Lynch Wildlife Habitat Management Area north of Pinedale, which opened to the public for the first time on May 10. The important wildlife habitat area was acquired through a generous donation by the Conservation Fund. The area is named after the former Conservation Fund employee who raised the money to acquire the property, and many others in the region, but was tragically killed in a skiing accident in May of 2015.



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## From the Front Desk...

Pinedale Game and Fish Office Managers Lori Johnson and Kristen Draney have been getting many questions about the status of Pinedale area waters for fishing. As is common this time of year, most area rivers and streams, including the Green River are running high and silty with spring run-off. One exception would be Pine Creek which flows out of Fremont Lake through the town of Pinedale. Lakes, on the other hand, are the place to be right now with the ice having just melted off and many fish hanging out near the surface.



## Dancing With the Stars

Big Piney Game Warden Adam Hymas took a break from area patrols to dazzle the crowd with Shayla Schell at the Big Piney Dancing with the Sublette Stars event. The event raised over \$56,000 for Children's Learning Centers in Sublette County.



## Donkeyball

The Pinedale Game and Fish office fielded a team in Pinedale's annual Donkey basketball tournament that represented the Department quite well by winning the tournament! At left, Large Carnivore Biologist Zach Turnbull puts up a shot. Proceeds from the event go toward the school's National Honor Society scholarship fund.





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## Get hooked on some adventure this summer!

The Wyoming Game & Fish Department is hosting a brand new wildlife conservation and outdoor recreation summer day camp. The camp is for students entering 5th and 6th grade. Camps are held in many locations across the state from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. each day. Campers will need to bring a water bottle and a lunch each day. Each camper will receive a Camp Wild T-shirt and journal for participating in the camp.



**GAME & FISH  
CAMP  
WILD**

*Space is limited, so register now before it's too late! The fee to attend is \$60 per child for the 3-day camp experience. To register, visit [wgfd.wyo.gov/store/store/conservation-camps](http://wgfd.wyo.gov/store/store/conservation-camps)*

For more information, e-mail [ashley.andersen@wyo.gov](mailto:ashley.andersen@wyo.gov)

### Locations & Dates:

**June 5-7** @ Thorne Rider Youth Camp near Buffalo/Sheridan

**June 13-15** @ Boyd Skinner Park in Pinedale

**June 19-21** @ Camp Russell Shelter at Curt Gowdy State Park between Cheyenne/Laramie

**June 28-30** @ Washington Park in Rawlins

**July 11-13** @ Lions Park Pavilion at Beck Lake Park in Cody

**July 18-20** @ Keith Rider Park in Douglas

**July 25-27** @ Game & Fish office in Green River

Each session will include hands-on learning about wildlife, habitats, aquatic ecology, navigation, basic survival, team-builders, and in most locations, fishing and/or archery. Participants will have the opportunity to experience quality time outside while having fun and learning more about Wyoming's amazing wildlife and outdoor recreation opportunities.



The Daniel Hatchery has a new hand in Jacob Rook. Rook graduated from Albertsons College of Idaho in the fall of 2014 with a B.S. in Biology. Jacob has worked with salmon in several Idaho hatcheries before being hired on at Wyoming's Daniel Hatchery in March.

## Kids Fishing Day June 3!

Kids age 13 and under are invited to 'get hooked on fishing' at the annual Kids Fishing Day event Saturday, June 3, 2017. The event will take place at the CCC Ponds three miles north of Pinedale. There will be short educational activities, lunch and the opportunity to catch rainbow trout or brown trout freshly stocked in the pond. Some fishing gear and worms will be available if needed. The entire event is free of charge. Registration begins at 10am at the CCC Ponds parking area. The event is planned to conclude at 3pm.





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## *Photo Page...*

*Photos taken in the Jackson Region over the past month by  
Regional Information & Education Specialist Mark Gocke*

